



Partnerships for Environmental Public Health

Strengthening a Dynamic Environmental Public Health Network for Tomorrow:

Advancing science through critical reflection

Speaker Biosketches

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Linda S. Birnbaum, Ph.D., is the director of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), part of the National Institutes of Health, and the National Toxicology Program (NTP). As NIEHS and NTP director, Birnbaum oversees a budget of \$850 million that funds biomedical research to discover how the environment influences human health and disease. The Institute also supports training, education, technology transfer, and community outreach. The NIEHS currently funds more than 1,000 research grants.



A board certified toxicologist, Birnbaum has served as a federal scientist for 31 years. Prior to her appointment as NIEHS and NTP director, she spent 19 years at the Environmental Protection Agency where she directed the largest division focusing on environmental health research. Birnbaum started her federal career with 10 years at the NIEHS — first as a senior staff fellow in the National Toxicology Program, then as a principal investigator and research microbiologist, and finally as a group leader for the Institute's Chemical Disposition Group.

Birnbaum has received many awards and recognitions. In October 2010, she was elected to the Institute of Medicine of the National Academies, one of the highest honors in the fields of medicine and health. She was elected to the Collegium Ramazzini, and received an honorary Doctor of Science from the University of Rochester and Distinguished Alumna Award from the University of Illinois.

Birnbaum is also an active member of the scientific community. She was vice president of the International Union of Toxicology, the umbrella organization for toxicology societies in more than 50 countries; former president of the Society of Toxicology, the largest professional organization of toxicologists in the world; former chair of the Division of Toxicology at the American Society of Pharmacology and Therapeutics; and former vice president of the American Aging Association.

She is the author of more than 700 peer-reviewed publications, book chapters, abstracts, and reports. Birnbaum's own research focuses on the pharmacokinetic behavior of environmental chemicals, mechanisms of action of toxicants including endocrine disruptors, and linking of real-world exposures to health effects. She is also an adjunct professor in the Gillings School of Global Public Health, the Curriculum in Toxicology, and the Department of Environmental Sciences and Engineering at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, as well as in the Integrated Toxicology Program at Duke University. A native of New Jersey, Birnbaum received her M.S. and Ph.D. in microbiology from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Phil Brown is professor of sociology and environmental studies at Brown University, where he leads the Contested Illnesses Research Group, directs the Community Engagement Core of the Superfund Research Program, and directs the Community Outreach and Translation Core of the Children's Environmental Health Center. He is the author of "No Safe Place: Toxic Waste, Leukemia, and Community Action" and "Toxic Exposures: Contested Illnesses and the Environmental Health Movement," editor of "Perspectives in Medical Sociology," co-editor of "Illness and the Environment: A Reader in Contested



Medicine,” and co-editor of “Social Movements in Health.” His newest book, just released, is “Contested Illnesses: Citizens, Science and Health Social Movements.” His current research includes biomonitoring and household exposure to chemicals and particulate matter, social policy and regulation of flame retardants, techniques and ethics of reporting data to study participants, and health social movements.

Gwen Collman is director of the NIEHS Division of Extramural Research and Training where she leads approximately 60 professional staff in areas of scientific program administration, peer review, and the management and administration of about 1,500 active grants each year. She directs scientific activities across the field of environmental health sciences including basic sciences (i.e., DNA repair, epigenetics, environmental genomics), organ-specific toxicology (i.e., reproductive, neurotoxicology, respiratory), public health related programs (i.e., environmental epidemiology, environmental public health), and training and career development. She also oversees the implementation of the Superfund Research Program and the Worker Education and Training Program.



Prior to her current role, Collman served in program development and management, beginning in 1992 as a member, then as Chief of the Susceptibility and Population Health Branch. During this time, she directed research on the role of genetic and environmental factors on the development of human disease, from animal models of genetic susceptibility to population studies focusing on etiology and intervention. She was responsible for building the NIEHS grant portfolio in environmental and molecular epidemiology, and developed several complex multidisciplinary research programs. These include the NIEHS Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Centers Program, the NIEHS/EPA Centers for Children's Environmental Health and Disease Prevention, and the Genes, Environment and Health Initiative. Also, under her guidance, a team created a vision for the Partnerships for Environmental Public Health programs for the next decade.

In recognition of her achievements, she is the recipient of numerous NIEHS Merit Awards, two NIH Director's Awards, and the DHHS Secretary's Award for Distinguished Service. Collman received a Ph.D. in environmental epidemiology from the University of North Carolina School of Public Health where she was awarded the 2009 H.A. Tyroler Distinguished Alumni Award.

Christina (Christie) Drew joined the NIEHS Division of Extramural Research, Program Analysis Branch in 2007 and became branch chief in 2009. She received her Ph.D. in geography from the University of Washington in 2002 for her work on transparent communication of complex environmental health decisions. She has a Masters of Health Science degree from the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health, and an undergraduate degree in government from the College of William and Mary.



Drew has been a researcher at the University of Washington in Seattle, and the Institute for Evaluating Health Risks in Washington, D.C. She has also worked at the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe in Copenhagen, and at Ross & Associates Environmental Consulting, Ltd. in Seattle. Her research interests have included environmental health risk communication, nuclear waste cleanup, community based

participatory research, geographic information systems, children's environmental health, pesticide exposure, and research evaluation.

Herb Fraser-Rahim is the environmental director of the Low Country Alliance for Model Communities (LAMC). As such, he is responsible for the development of strategic and tactical approaches for the remediation of negative environmental impacts to the LAMC communities as well as environmental strategies and tactics for future development in the LAMC communities. He is a graduate of Morgan State University (B.S. mathematics) and The Citadel (B.S. civil engineering). Herb retired from the Navy as an environmental engineer with over thirty years of experience and is a registered professional engineer in the state of South Carolina.



Ed Kang is a key staff member in the Office of Communications and Public Liaison at NIEHS. In addition to serving as the primary point of contact for the extramural community, Ed is the social media program manager for the Institute. His expertise is in communicating research findings to a wide variety of audiences, including the media and general public, using traditional and innovative methods.



Ed brings a unique and diverse perspective from his experience working in federal agencies, private industry, and academia. Prior to joining NIEHS, he led major communication, outreach, and education efforts at the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, NASA, IBM, and the University of Vermont. He holds a degree in business from the University of Maryland, College Park.

Amy D. Kyle has both practical and academic experience in environmental health research and practice. She is on the faculty of the School of Public Health at the University of California Berkeley. She directs research translation for interdisciplinary research programs in environmental health sciences and technology and conducts research within the Berkeley Superfund Research Program, Center for Excellence in Environmental Public Health Tracking, and the Center for Integrative Research on Childhood Leukemia and the Environment. Her research is about how science is interpreted in legislative and administrative policy venues, methods for translation of scientific results and knowledge in policy systems and networks, and the development of concepts and metrics to better reflect current scientific understanding on topics that include chemicals policies, children's environmental health, and cumulative impacts on communities. She works with community-based and non-governmental organizations, executive and legislative agencies, and academic partners. In her most formative years, she served in senior positions in environmental protection at the state level, working on a wide range of environmental, public health, and natural resources issues. Her Ph.D. in environmental health sciences and policy and M.P.H. are from the University of California, Berkeley, and her B.A. is from Harvard College. She was elected as Councilor to the Environment Section of the American Public Health Association and was appointed by U.S. EPA Administrator Lisa Jackson to the Children's Health Protection Advisory Committee where she leads a group considering implications of research on prenatal exposure for agency actions including chemicals policies.



Pamela K. Miller founded Alaska Community Action on Toxics (ACAT) in 1997 and serves as executive director. Pam has thirty years of experience in environmental health research and advocacy. She is known for her work as an advocate for statewide, national, and international chemicals policy reform to protect environmental and human health, with an emphasis in the Arctic and sub-Arctic regions. Since 2000, ACAT has been awarded multiple federal grants for which Pam has been serving as team leader and, for the past five years, as principal investigator of a community-based participatory research team that includes faculty investigators from universities in Alaska and New York. These research projects rely on collaborative efforts with Indigenous communities in Alaska to address environmental health and justice issues. She serves on the steering committee for national campaigns working toward chemicals policy reform, the Safer Chemicals Healthy Families campaign, and the Environmental Justice and Health Policy Alliance. She has worked internationally as a leader within the International POPs (persistent organic pollutants) Elimination Network (IPEN—a network of over 700 environmental health groups) in the negotiation and implementation of a global legally-binding treaty to phase out production of POPs. Pam was instrumental in prompting decisions by the EPA for national phase-outs of certain pesticides, including lindane and endosulfan. She holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Wittenberg University and a master's degree in environmental science (Miami University, Oxford, Ohio, 1981). She is the recipient of a 2012 Meritorious Service Award for community service by the Board of Regents of the University of Alaska.



Bryan Parras is a Houston filmmaker who specializes in documentation of environmental and social justice movement stories. As organizer / media coordinator of T.e.j.a.s. (Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Services), Parras has recently worked on location throughout the South and Southwest chronicling events in greater New Orleans and rural Louisiana after hurricanes Katrina and Rita, environmental justice and immigrant rights actions in Houston's Manchester neighborhood and Taylor, Texas, and the huge groundswell of support for unjustly incarcerated African-American youth in Jena, La. He currently serves as a consultant to the NIEHS-funded GC-HARMS project, promoting and coordinating dialogue among researchers, community partners, and the general public.



Parras is a Theatre of the Oppressed (TO) practitioner who also specializes in videography / still photography documentation of the TO process. He has created video TO training materials for the NIEHS, and collaborated with numerous regional environmental justice organizations and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to document conferences, workshops, and regulatory hearings.

Parras has presented with John Sullivan at numerous EPA community involvement conferences, the Alaska Environmental Forum, and the Pedagogy & Theatre of the Oppressed annual conferences (Chapel Hill, N.C., 2006; Austin, Texas, 2010).

Kristi Pettibone, Ph.D., M.S. has more than 10 years' experience managing, directing, and guiding public health policy research and evaluation projects. She holds a Ph.D. in policy sciences (health policy concentration). She served as director of The MayaTech Corporation's Center for Community Prevention and Treatment Research and is currently an evaluator in the Program Analysis Branch of the National Institute of Environmental Health Science's Division of Extramural Research and Training. She has worked on evaluations of several federal grant portfolios including CDC's Injury Control Research Centers and motor vehicle injuries and NIEHS' endocrine disruptor, nanotechnology health and safety, and neurodegeneration portfolios.



Molly Puente has been a grants management specialist with the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) since May of 2011. Before coming to NIEHS, Molly was grants management specialist for the National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) for two years, and a Presidential Management Fellow at NIH for two years, where she rotated in extramural research offices at Fogarty International Center (FIC), the National Institute of Environmental Health Science (NIEHS), the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID), and the Office of the Director's Office for Policy of Extramural Research Activities (OPERA) and Office of Portfolio Analysis and Strategic Initiatives (OPASI).



Molly came to NIH in August of 2007, following completion of her Ph.D. in entomology from North Carolina State University. During her doctorate program, she was an active fellow of the W.M. Keck Center for Behavioral Biology, where she developed a strong interest in interdisciplinary research administration and policy. Pursuing her interests in policy and management, Molly earned a Master's in Public Administration in 2006. As an M.P.A. student, she interned with W.E.C.O., a program of the N.C. State Extension Service that works with scientists, government officials, and local stakeholders to find collaborative solutions for watershed resource issues. She received her B.S. in biology from Duke University in 2001.

Maria Natalia Rocha-Tracy has been the executive director of the Brazilian Immigrant Center in Boston, Massachusetts since spring 2010. Under her leadership, the 17-year old organization has renewed itself and has extended its traditional mission as a workers' center to encompass a major new domestic worker organizing initiative, with the goal of winning a new Domestic Worker Bill of Rights for Massachusetts. She is also a Ph.D. Candidate in sociology at Boston University, studying "Immigration Policy and Mixed-Status Families: A Comparative Study of Brazilian Immigrants in the Metropolitan Areas of Boston, Massachusetts, and Lisbon, Portugal." Earlier, she earned a bachelor's degree in social psychology and a master's degree in applied sociology, both at the University of Massachusetts, Boston. Her master's research also concerned immigration, and was entitled, "Brazilian Immigrants in the U.S.: Pathways and Barriers to Assimilation." Since her undergraduate studies, she has been interested in issues of immigration, transnationalism, education, and race, including related policy questions. She has also worked on public policy and evaluation research projects at the Harvard School of Public Health, the Brown University Department of Education, and the School of Social Work at Boston University. She has taught many



university level courses, including Life Span Development; Non-Western Cultures, focusing on Africa and China; and Sociological Research Methods. For three years she has been a lecturer in sociology at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, where she regularly teaches Race & Ethnic Relations.

Connie Roser-Renouf, Ph.D., is a research professor at George Mason University's Center for Climate Change Communication. Her research focuses on understanding how diverse publics use, interpret, and respond to information on the issue of climate change. The guiding objective of her work is the identification of effective communication strategies that inform and engage audiences.



Over the past three years, she has collaborated on several large, nationally representative surveys that have provided important benchmark and planning data on Americans' climate-relevant knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, and policy preferences. Data from these surveys have been used to identify six distinct audience groups that hold divergent beliefs and favor different responses to the threat. Ongoing work focuses on identifying effective communication strategies for each of these groups, to move them toward greater issue engagement and a deeper understanding of the issue. She is sharing this research with a number of organizations to assist in their message development, including NASA, NACCHO (National Association of County and City Health Officials), the National Park Service, AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials), the California Department of Public Health, the Science Museums of Minnesota and Virginia, and the National Audubon Society.

Connie earned her Ph.D. in communication research at Stanford University in 1986. Prior to joining the Center at George Mason, she taught and conducted research at the University of California at Santa Barbara, the University of Denver, the University of Pittsburgh, and Humboldt State University.

C. Eduardo Siqueira graduated in Medicine in the Medical School of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro. He has a Master's in Public Health from the Johns Hopkins University School of Hygiene and Public Health, and a doctoral degree in work environment policy from the University of Massachusetts Lowell.



Siqueira is currently the associate director for research at the Mauricio Gastón Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy at UMass Boston. Siqueira has researched the political economy of the migration of hazards between developed and developing countries, health care disparities in injuries and illnesses amongst health care workers in Eastern Massachusetts, and environmental justice for Brazilian immigrant workers in Massachusetts. He was the principal investigator of the NIEHS- funded project Collaboration for Better Work Environment for Brazilian Immigrants (COBWEB) in Massachusetts between 2003 and 2008.

John Sullivan is currently an instructor in University of Texas Medical Branch Department of Preventive Medicine & Community Health, an associate in the Institute for Medical Humanities, and directs the Public Forum & Toxics Assistance Division of the NIEHS Center in Environmental Toxicology Community Outreach & Engagement Core. He uses Augusto Boal's Image and Forum Theater techniques to teach toxicological concepts, create public dialogues on environmental risk and the health and social effects of toxic exposures, and develop bidirectional capacity for researchers and community members to effectively collaborate in community based participatory research. He also coordinates activities of the Community Science Workshop, a facet of UTMB's Institute for Translational Sciences / Clinical & Translational Science Award Community Engagement & Research Key Resource.



Karen Williams is the director of qualitative research at St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities in Houston, Texas. While attending the doctoral program at The University of Texas School of Public Health, she became involved in participatory community health assessments with inner-city neighborhoods in Houston. At that time, she also worked as assistant director of research for St. Luke's Episcopal Health Charities, the grant making arm of St. Luke's Episcopal Health System, one of Houston's largest tertiary health care systems. After receiving her Ph.D. in public health, Karen taught four years in the master of science program in health care administration at Texas Southern University (TSU) and served as director of the TSU's Center of Excellence in Health Disparities Research in Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke funded by the National Center on Minority Health and Health Disparities.



In 2007, Karen was appointed assistant professor in the Department of Obstetrics and Gynecology at The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) in Galveston. While at UTMB, Karen conducted research in community academic partnerships, nutrition and physical fitness interventions, and health disparities. Her long-term career goal is to: 1) build theory for the two-way information exchange between universities and lay communities to eliminate health disparities, and 2) apply this theory in reducing health disparities in vulnerable populations.

Sacoby Wilson, Ph.D., is an environmental health scientist with expertise in environmental justice and environmental health disparities. His primary research interests are related to issues that impact underserved, socially and economically disadvantaged, marginalized, environmental justice, and health disparity populations - including issues such as environmental justice, air pollution, housing disparities, built environment, climate change, drinking water quality, food justice, Port of Charleston, sewer and water infrastructure, goods movement, traffic exposure and health disparities, community-university environmental health partnerships, industrial animal production, exposures for subsistence fishers, and community revitalization.



Current projects focus on population research in several ways. He is performing secondary data analysis to look at burden, exposure, risk, and health disparities in South Carolina; pollution and health issues for

underserved populations living near the Port of Charleston; long-term impacts of exposure to chlorine after a man-made disaster; infrastructure disparities and environmental injustice in North Carolina; and environmental health disparities in Tennessee and other Southern states.

He is also building a Program on Community Engagement, Environmental Justice, and Health (CEEJH) to study and address health issues for environmental justice and health disparity populations through community-university partnerships and the use of CBPR in Maryland and beyond.

Elizabeth C. Yeampierre, a Puerto Rican civil rights attorney of African and Indigenous ancestry born and raised in New York City, is Executive Director of UPROSE, Brooklyn's oldest Latino community based organization. Her vision for an inter-generational, multi-cultural, and community led organization is the driving force behind UPROSE; she is a long-time advocate and trailblazer for community organizing around sustainable just development in Sunset Park and holds a law degree from Northeastern University along with a Certificate of Non-Profit Management from Columbia University.



Elizabeth is part of the New York City environmental justice leadership responsible for getting NY State's first Brownfield legislation, Article X power plant legislation and NYC's Solid Waste Management Plan passed. In Sunset Park, Brooklyn, she facilitated an aggressive urban forestry initiative, helped double the amount of open space and developed a project that resulted in the retro-fitting and re-powering of 12 diesel trucks for a local business. She successfully organized a community coalition that defeated a 520 mega-watt power plant application.

Elizabeth created a community participatory model that resulted in a community led greenway design for the waterfront. \$8.4 million dollars have been allocated for the greenway and park and \$36 million dollars in Brownfield remediation funds for the waterfront park, which is the largest brownfield grant in New York State history. Elizabeth secured \$1,000,000 for emission reduction projects that have been distributed throughout the community. Three years ago she initiated a climate adaption /community resilience effort to address local climate justice concerns for the waterfront community in which she lives and works. Elizabeth serves on Mayor Bloomberg's Sustainability and Long Term Planning Advisory Board, and served as a commissioner on the historic NYS Traffic Congestion Mitigation Commission. Elizabeth is the first Latina chair of the U.S. EPA National Environmental Justice Advisory Council where she initiated the inclusion of a youth forum dedicated to developing youth leadership dedicated to environmental justice. In the past year, she successfully advocated for the inclusion of environmental justice in the NYS State Climate Action Plan.